School Quality Review Report

Highland Middle School

Anderson Community Schools

March 13ᵗʰ – 14ᵗʰ

Review Team Members

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I.   Background on the School Quality Review

Public Law 221 (PL 221) was passed in 1999 before the enactment of the federal *No Child Left behind Act* (NCLB). It serves as the state's accountability framework. Among other sanctions, the law authorizes the Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) to assign an expert team to conduct a School Quality Review for schools placed in the lowest category or designation of school performance for two consecutive years.

> *(a) The board shall direct that the department conduct a quality review of a school that is subject to IC 20-31-9-3. (b) The board shall determine the scope of the review and appoint an expert team under IC 20-31-9-3. (Indiana State Board of Education; 511 IAC 6.2-8-2; filed Jan 28, 2011, 3:08 p.m.: 20110223-IR-511100502FRA)*

The school quality review (SQR) is a needs assessment meant to evaluate the academic program and operational conditions within an eligible school. The SQR will result in actionable feedback that will promote improvement, including the reallocation of resources or requests for technical assistance. The process is guided by a rubric (see Appendix B) aligned to the 8 Turnaround Principles. The school quality review includes a pre-visit analysis and planning meeting, onsite comprehensive review, and may include targeted follow-up visits.

State law authorizes the SBOE to establish an expert team to conduct the School Quality Review known as the Technical Assistance Team (TAT). Membership must include representatives from the community or region the school serves; and, may consist of school superintendents, members of governing bodies, teachers from high performing school corporations, and special consultants or advisers.
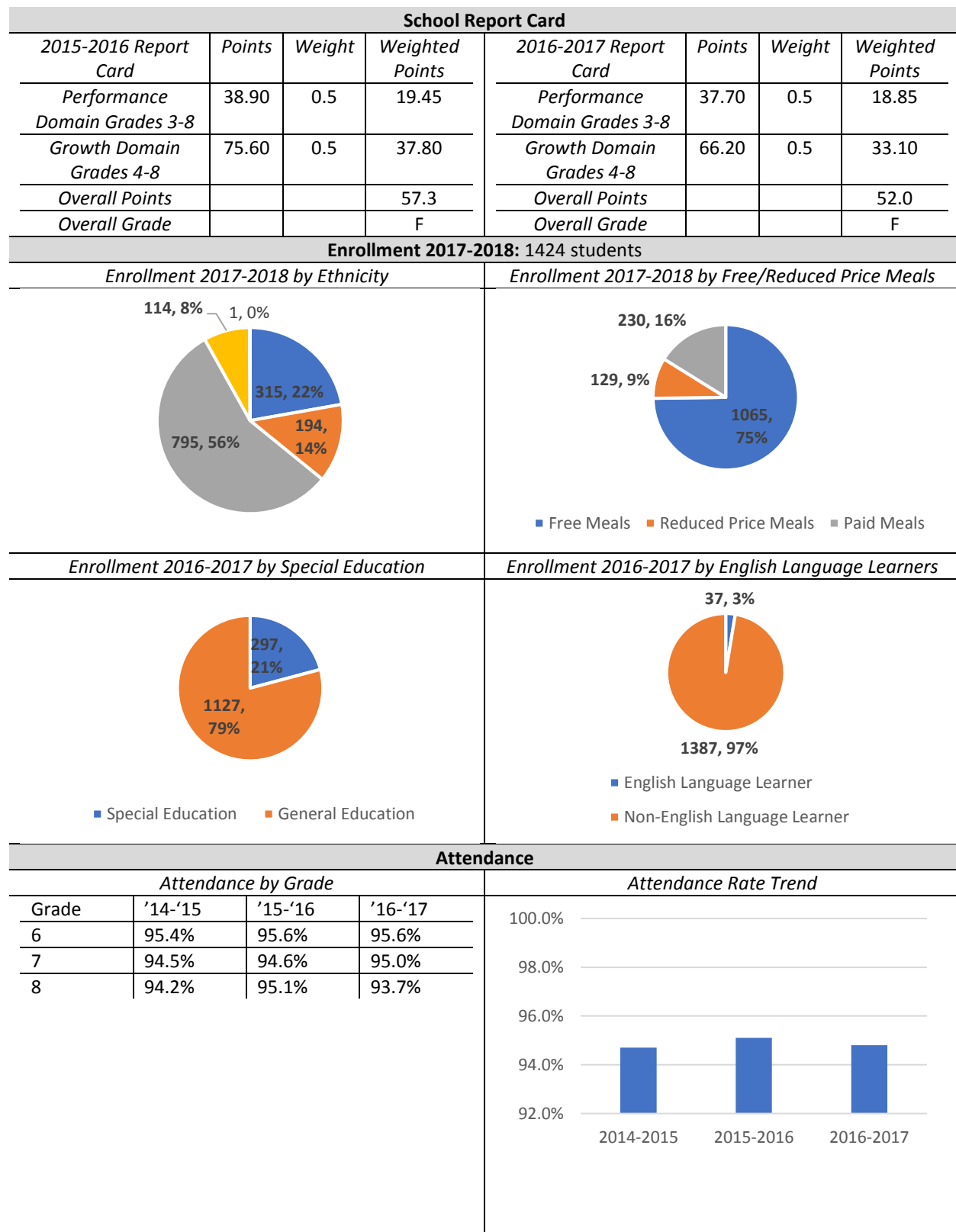
II.   Overview of the School Quality Review Process

The School Quality Review process is designed to identify Highland Middle School's strengths and areas for improvement organized around the [United States Department of Education's Eight School Turnaround Principles](). In particular, the School Quality Review process focused on two or three Turnaround Principles that were identified as priorities by the school and its district.

The on-site review consisted of the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) visiting the school for two days. During the two days, the TAT (1) conducted separate focus groups with students, teachers, and parents, (2) observed two professional learning community meetings with teachers, (3) observed instruction in 33 classrooms, and (4) interviewed school and district leaders.

Prior to the visit, teachers completed an online survey, with 36 of 117 teachers participating. Parents were also invited to complete a survey with 125 parent surveys submitted. Finally, the school leadership team completed a self-evaluation. Both surveys and the self-evaluation are made up of questions that align to school improvement principles and indicators (Appendix B).
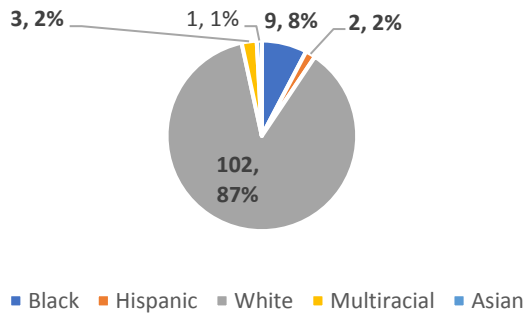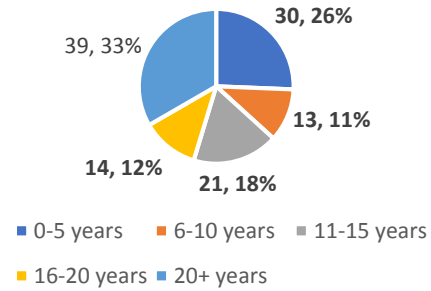
III. Data Snapshot for Highland Middle School

School Report Card							
2015-2016 Report Card	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*	*2016-2017 Report Card*	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*
Performance Domain Grades 3-8	38.90	0.5	19.45	*Performance Domain Grades 3-8*	37.70	0.5	18.85
Growth Domain Grades 4-8	75.60	0.5	37.80	*Growth Domain Grades 4-8*	66.20	0.5	33.10
Overall Points			57.3	*Overall Points*			52.0
Overall Grade			F	*Overall Grade*			F

Enrollment 2017-2018: 1424 students

Enrollment 2017-2018 by Ethnicity	*Enrollment 2017-2018 by Free/Reduced Price Meals*

114, 8%   1, 0%
315, 22%
194, 14%
795, 56%

230, 16%
129, 9%
1065, 75%

■ Free Meals ■ Reduced Price Meals ■ Paid Meals

Enrollment 2016-2017 by Special Education	*Enrollment 2016-2017 by English Language Learners*

297, 21%
1127, 79%

■ Special Education   ■ General Education

37, 3%
1387, 97%

■ English Language Learner
■ Non-English Language Learner

Attendance

Attendance by Grade				*Attendance Rate Trend*

Grade	'14-'15	'15-'16	'16-'17
6	95.4%	95.6%	95.6%
7	94.5%	94.6%	95.0%
8	94.2%	95.1%	93.7%

Attendance Rate Trend
100.0%
98.0%
96.0%
94.0%
92.0%
2014-2015   2015-2016   2016-2017

School Personnel

Teacher Count 2015-2016: 117

Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Ethnicity

3, 2% 1, 1% 9, 8% 2, 2%

102, 87%

■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ White ■ Multiracial ■ Asian

Teacher Count 2015-2016 by Years of Experience

30, 26%

39, 33%

13, 11%

14, 12%   21, 18%

■ 0-5 years ■ 6-10 years ■ 11-15 years
■ 16-20 years ■ 20+ years

Student Academic Performance

ISTEP+ 2016-2017 Both English/Language Arts and Math

353, 28%

927, 72%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass
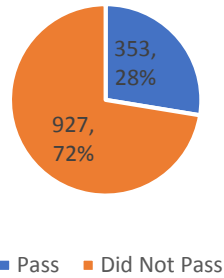
ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend Both English/Language Arts and Math

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
School	29.0%	26.7%	27.6%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School
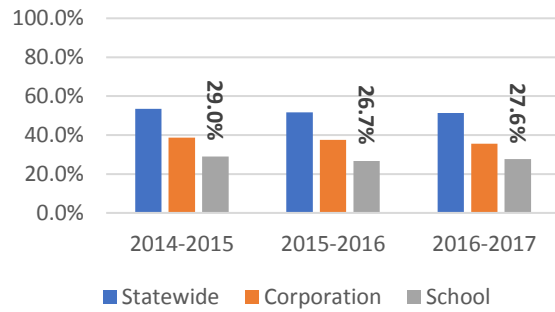
ISTEP+ 2016-2017: English/Language Arts

533, 42%

750, 58%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass
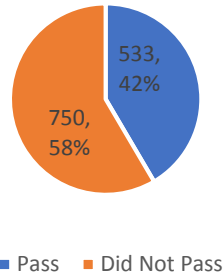
ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend: English/Language Arts

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
School	44.8%	43.4%	41.5%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School

ISTEP+ 2016-2017 Math

424, 32%

881, 68%

■ Pass ■ Did Not Pass

ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend Math

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
School	37.6%	31.8%	32.5%

■ Statewide ■ Corporation ■ School
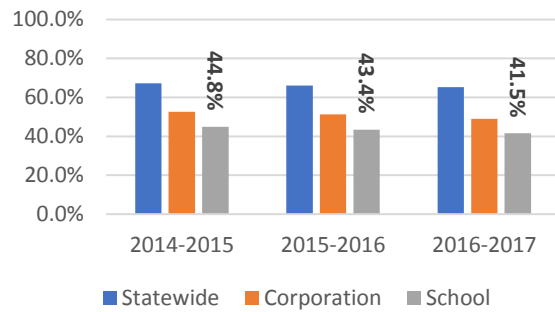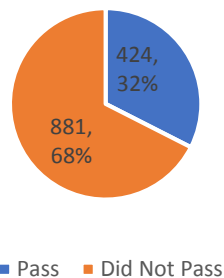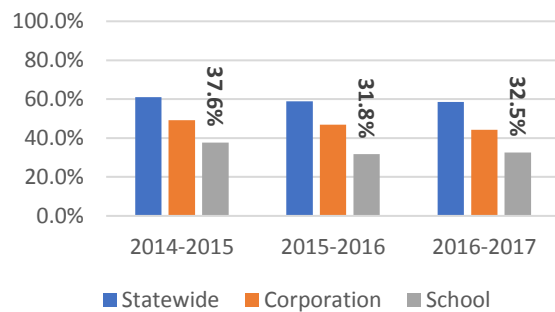
IV.   Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle #3: Effective Instruction

Background

The next two sections of the report illustrate the Technical Assistance Team's key findings, supporting evidence, and overall rating for each of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

To thoughtfully identify these prioritized Turnaround Principles, school and district leaders used a "Turnaround Principle Alignment Tool" provided by the Indiana State Board of Education to determine the two to three Turnaround Principles that most closely align with the goals and strategies outlined in the school's improvement plan.

This report focuses on these prioritized Turnaround Principles to provide a strategically targeted set of findings and recommendations. Additional evidence on the other six Turnaround Principles can be found in Appendix A of this report.

School Turnaround Principle 3: Effective Instruction			
Evidence Sources			
Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			
Strengths			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• Teachers have the structure and habit of posting daily lesson objectives.			• 3.1
• Data is available in the form of mini-assessments for Math and English/ Language Arts and NWEA in order to make instructional decisions based on student growth.			• 3.5
• Classroom behavior is consistent, with a focus on positive behavior and growth both socio-emotionally and academically.			• 3.6

Areas for Improvement	Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• Few teachers demonstrate variation in their instructional and response strategies; there is minimal student engagement in rigorous and relevant course work.	• 3.2
• In most classrooms, high expectations for student academics are not evident; student placement is based off of entrance data and students are grouped according to academic level.	• 3.6
• Data is collected throughout the building; however, a system for analyzing the multiple forms of data in a user-friendly, student-focused format in order to inform differentiated instruction is not present.	• 3.5, 3.6

School Turnaround Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention Systems Evidence Sources			
Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			

Strengths	Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• The majority of teachers are provided resources in order to implement a standards-based curriculum.	• 4.4
• A team of instructional coaches are available for teachers to grow their professional practice in order to impact student growth.	• 4.2
• Mini-assessments are administered in English Language Arts and Math in order to assess student mastery of standards and is intended to inform Success class enrollment.	• 4.3
Areas for Improvement	Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• Success is used as an intervention; however, is not using evidence-based strategies and materials, implemented with fidelity, nor monitored with a consistent plan of action in order to provide additional instruction for students chronically underperforming in Math and English Language Arts.	• 4.5
• A consistent coaching cycle that connects classroom observation data to differentiated, job-embedded professional development linked to student and educator needs is not evident.	• 4.2, 4.4
• Forty-five minutes per week are designated for teachers and administrators to engage in Professional Learning Communities; however, Professional Learning Communities lack a structured protocol that ensures (1) analysis of student data, (2) discussions of instructional strategies and design, and (3) planning for action based on measurable results.	• 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5

VI.   Recommendations

Background

This section outlines an intentionally targeted set of recommendations that align to one or more of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles. Anchored in the United States Department of Education's Turnaround Principles framework, these recommendations are representative of what the Technical Assistance Team believes to be the most immediate changes needed to accelerate growth in academic and non-academic student outcomes at Highland Middle School. These recommendations should not be thought of as an exhaustive set of school improvement strategies, but rather as a part of the ongoing and continuous school improvement process.

Recommendation 1
Research and establish a consistent opportunity for learning through an evidence based intervention system that addresses not only the needs of students who are two or more years behind in English/ Language Arts and Mathematics, but also student enrichment needs as standard mastery is acknowledged through data-based collaborations. Coupled with a consistent intervention system that targets growth for all students, consider reorganizing students into heterogeneous groups in order to support an optimal learning environment where all students are presented with high academic and behavioral expectations promoting individual student growth and achievement.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.1, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.2, 2.3, 3.5, 3.6, 4.3, 4.5, 5.4, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2
Rationale
Intervention frameworks that include (1) reliable, valid assessments administered to all students, (2) explicit, differentiated instruction for all students, (3) research-based interventions to target specific students' needs, and (4) ongoing professional development to support teachers and administrators in the implementation of the intervention framework have shown a significant impact on student learning. Through John Hattie's research, a consistently implemented response to intervention program presents a 1.1% effect size, or 36% gain, as it relates to student achievement. [1] Additionally, providing professional development to educators in order to support the implementation of a consistent intervention system provides further growth opportunities for staff to impact student achievement. On average, effective teachers produce gains of about 53 percentage points in student achievement over one year, whereas the least effective teachers produce

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[1] Killian, Shaun (2017) Hattie Effect Size 2016 Update. Retrieved from: http://www.evidencebasedteaching.org.au/hattie-effect-size-2016-update/

achievement gains of about 14 percentage points over one year. [2] Providing ongoing, high quality professional development over academic initiatives offers teachers the opportunity to develop their expertise, thus leading to an overall increase in school growth and achievement.

Further, reorganizing students into heterogeneous groups provides a differentiated opportunity for learning for every subgroup of students. Grouping students heterogeneously allows for students to learn from one another, understand diversity within their community, and provides an opportunity for educators to implement flexible grouping into their classroom instruction. On the contrary, in a classroom with little or no differentiated instruction, only student similarities seem to take center stage. However, in a differentiated classroom, commonalities are acknowledged and built upon, and student differences become important elements in teaching and learning as well. [3]

Evidence from the school quality review indicates that Success period is utilized as a means to provide Tier II instruction four days a week at thirty-five minutes per day as determined by English/ Language Arts and Mathematics teachers. Student placement in Success period is determined by NWEA assessments, instructional assessments, and/or teacher observation of student needs. Once students are placed in a Math or English/ Language Arts Success period, instruction is based upon teacher discretion of student needs based on the gathered quantitative and qualitative data of individual students. Those students not placed in a Success class utilize Homeroom in order to listen to announcements, watch ten minutes of student news, and spend fifteen minutes on Study Island. Classroom observations of Success period indicate that there is limited consistency with the implementation of this particular period as it is intended. For example, in one Success English/ Language Arts classroom, students took notes from a video; while in another Success English/ Language Arts classroom, students completed Brain Pop quizzes individually with no direct instruction from the teacher as to correct vs. incorrect answers with explanations for learning. Observations of Homeroom demonstrate non-compliance to Study Island by the students, with limited monitoring of implementation by the teachers.

This observational evidence is coupled with qualitative data gathered during focus group discussions. When asked about Success period, one student stated, "We are put in Success class based on the way we work. If we don't get our work done in class, then we go in Success classes." When asked about Study Island, students responded with the sentence, "It is good." On the other hand, the teacher focus group indicated that, "Homeroom can be used

[2] Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

[3] Tomlinson, C. A. (1995). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms*. Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

more effectively." Several teachers echoed the thought that Study Island was not the best program for all students, as it does not teach them how to correct their mistakes. Teachers also spoke of the difficulty to motivate students through Study Island, indicating that several students merely comply with being on the computer for this dedicated time in Homeroom. When asked what was needed to create a productive Success period experience for students, all teachers in the focus group stated that consistency throughout the school would be beneficial for student growth.

Further, the discussions of student grouping as it pertains to student needs was a prevalent topic among focus groups and classroom observations. Students are grouped into "color bands" based on their performance level utilizing the ISTEP+ assessment, the NWEA assessment, and/or student reading levels. This type of grouping places students below grade level in the "green band," students performing at grade level in the "red band," students performing above grade level in the "plaid band," and students for whom it is decided as needing a self-contained classroom in the "platinum band." Evidence collected during focus groups indicate that the leveled bands are not conducive to an optimal learning environment for all students. In particular, the teacher focus group states, "The jury is still out on the way we group kids based on ability. Instruction is the same no matter what team you are on; however, remediation is focused a bit more on the green team." This conversation is echoed when speaking with students about the color band grouping. During the student focus group, students stated, "The colors mean that people need help when they are in the lowest group and the people ranked highest are better at academics." Additional students followed up that statement with, "Students like it because they aren't put in classes with kids that are smarter than them, but then they don't like it because they get talked about."

Student grouping was also brought to the forefront of debriefing over classroom observations when differences were noted in instruction based on the team being observed. In 39% of classroom observations, "The majority of students interact with and support each other about their learning." Additionally, in 24% of classroom observations, "High expectations for academics are evident." During debrief conversations, discussions included a difference in academic expectations and classroom interactions between the ability bands of students. Further, in 18% of classroom observations, "The teacher regularly asks higher level questions." Moreover, in 21% of classroom observations, "Students are provided differentiated instruction, with support to match their needs." Debrief conversations demonstrate that low-level instruction is provided to students with little to no differentiation, which was most prevalent in classroom observations of the lowest academic ability student group.

According to the parent survey, parents demonstrate that 43% agree or somewhat agree with the statement, "In our school students, who are struggling, are quickly identified and provided with additional instructional support." Additionally, the parent survey indicates that 31% agree or somewhat agree with the statement, "Parents are informed if a child is struggling and given suggestions to help them at home." A resounding statement from the

parent survey exclaims, "The kids aren't getting the help they need, and the kids with IEPs are just pushed along the system."

By providing timely interventions for students not mastering grade level standards, and embracing a heterogeneous, differentiated learning experience for all students, student growth and achievement will remain at the forefront of Highland Middle School's mission for success.

Recommendation 2
Engage in the restructure, implementation, and facilitation of Professional Learning Communities that (1) prioritize analysis of student data, (2) discuss current instructional strategies and design, and (3) plan for action based on measurable results. Within this Professional Learning Community model, seek to provide timely and relevant professional development opportunities for teachers to apply in their individual classrooms in order to build capacity throughout each collaborative team.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.2, 4.4, 5.3, 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.3
Rationale
"The term 'professional learning community' is used to describe every imaginable combination of individuals with an interest in education. In fact, the term has been used so universally that it is in danger of losing all meaning. Initial enthusiasm can give way to confusion, followed by implementation problems, abandonment, and the search for a new initiative." [4]

In order to combat this trend, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) should focus on a select few big ideas that maintain the emphasis and direction of sustainable collaboration through PLCs. The first big idea is the commitment to ensuring that all students learn. This big idea is accompanied by these guiding questions when collaborating in PLCs: (1) What do we want each student to learn? (2) How will we know when each student has learned it? (3) How will we respond when a student experienced difficulty in learning or exceeded learning expectations? In anchoring these three questions into the first big idea of ensuring each student learns, educators are able to hold timely, intervention-based discussions on next steps to ensure growth for all students. The second big idea centers on building and maintaining a culture of collaboration. Creating a structure in which educators experience the value in a systematic process of analyzing data based on an ongoing cycle of questions that promote deep learning and active engagement are key elements of effective PLCs. The third big idea focuses on student results. A results-oriented PLC moves the conversation from if the standard has been taught, to if the standard has been mastered on an individual student basis. Stemming from these conversations, actions based on measurable results are produced, creating an optimal growth environment for both students and educators. Encompassing these three big ideas, is the concept of hard work and commitment as |

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[4] DuFour, R., Eaker, R. E., & National Educational Service (U.S.). (1999). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington, Ind.: National Educational Service.

collaborative conversations shift from student-based qualitative conversations, to educator-based discussions in order to ensure student growth and mastery for all.[5]

Evidence from the school quality review indicates that Professional Learning Communities in their current state focus on qualitative discussions ranging from student behaviors to conversations over logistics for daily student activities. Although Professional Learning Communities utilize a structured template in order to guide discussions, qualitative collaboration over student behaviors demonstrated the focus of one observed PLC during the school quality review. Another PLC began with a focus on the socio-emotional well-being of particular students, with these conversations also including only qualitative teacher-led data. This particular PLC did move to a conversation revolving around how Social Studies teachers can help English/ Language Arts teachers, and concurrently how Science teachers can help Math teachers. However, these conversations included concepts in which students face a challenge, over discussions centered on horizontal alignment of instructional design in order to teach each concept, coupled with quantitative data to inform the collaboration.

As Professional Learning Community collaborations impact classroom instruction, classroom observations demonstrate that in 21% of observations, "A rigorous Depth of Knowledge is evident." Additionally, in only 18% of classroom observations, "Students are able to articulate the lesson objective and its purpose," and, "Teachers regularly ask higher level questions." As Professional Learning Communities encompass collaboration over not only academic, but also the socio-emotional well-being of all students, in 42% of classroom observations during the school quality review, "Teachers recognize and reinforce positive behaviors."

According to the teacher survey data, on average, teachers somewhat agree with the following statements; "Our faculty works together, continually and naturally to help each other improve his/her professional practices," and, "Our teachers are planning lessons collaboratively using curriculum maps with sequenced student-learning objectives." Additionally, the parent survey data indicates that 53% of parents somewhat agree or agree with the statement, "My child can accurately describe their objectives of the day." Parent survey data also demonstrates that 50% of parents agree or somewhat agree with the statement, "Teachers provide clear instruction and feedback to students."

Aligning a results-oriented Professional Learning Community protocol with classroom instruction in not only content classes, but also intervention opportunities for students, provides a growth opportunity for all, as is at the forefront of Highland Middle School's mission.

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[5] DuFour, R., Eaker, R. E., & National Educational Service (U.S.). (1999). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington, Ind.: National Educational Service.

Recommendation 3
Research and develop a consistent, systemic instructional coaching cycle that is defined by the following characteristics: (1) observation of instructional practices, (2) individualized feedback of classroom instructional practices, (3) job-embedded professional development, and (4) modeling of effective instructional practices. Aggregate classroom observation data in order to determine additional professional development opportunities for administrators and teachers to build the capacity of their professional expertise.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.9, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 6.3, 7.3
Rationale
A systems approach to continual improvement requires a balance of both systemic actions and systemic thinking. Moving to a systems-based instructional coaching cycle takes random acts of improvement and transforms them into an aligned process for improvement. [6] Providing consistency throughout the building in seeking to grow all educators enables staff to embrace a growth mindset within the coaching cycle. Additionally, professionalized settings that embody a growth mindset, in which educators are coached towards improvement through targeted professional development, promotes collective teacher efficacy. John Hattie's research on student achievement demonstrates that (1) providing formative evaluations presents a 0.7% effect size as it relates to student achievement, (2) implementing varied teaching strategies presents a 0.6% effect size as it relates to student achievement, (3) targeted professional development presents a 0.5% effect size as it relates to student achievement and (4) collective teacher efficacy presents a 1.6% effect size as it relates to student achievement. [7] Evidence from the school quality review demonstrates that Highland Middle School employs a data coach, an e-learning coach, an English/ Language Arts coach, and a Math coach. Although several teachers request for these coaches to be present in their classrooms, a coaching cycle based on informal, formative observations for all educators is not evident. For those that request to collaborate with the coaches, support is not systemic in nature as a common protocol for observation and coaching is not evident.

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[6] Shipley, Jim (2015). *A Leader's Guide to Systems Improvement*. Florida: Jim Shipley and Associates Integrated Systems Solutions.

[7] Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning*. London: Routledge.

During the building leadership focus group, it was stated that although coaches are able to have a coaching cycle, it does not always happen. The coaches also indicate that they do not use a common informal evaluation form in order to gather data over classroom observations, ultimately utilized to collaborate over common professional development opportunities throughout the building. One coach in particular stated, "We need to have a common philosophy on teaching, in which our coaching can become much more systematic so that we know what we are looking for across the board." The building leadership focus group also indicates that the English/ Language Arts and Math teams have addressed understanding Depth of Knowledge (DOK) somewhat this year; however, all educators have not been provided intentional professional development and/or coaching over DOK. This statement is coupled with classroom observation analytics during the school quality review, in which 21% of classrooms were evidenced instructing with a rigorous Depth of Knowledge. This conjoining of qualitative and quantitative data in order to establish a building-wide professional development need is the crux of launching a systems-based coaching cycle.

Further, the teacher focus group indicates that professional development, although choice-driven, is decided upon by the administration. Teachers state that several options for professional development focus on how to create lessons utilizing Canvas and how to use technology applications in classrooms. As evident by the teacher survey, 61% of teachers somewhat agree or agree with the statement, "Our principal and school leaders observe and provide meaningful feedback and development to each teacher on a weekly basis to ensure instructional alignment with state standards."

Moreover, building administrator's professional development needs are not evidenced as a priority for staff and student growth and achievement. The school district is currently collaborating with the Anderson Community School Board of Education in order to provide building administration the opportunity for targeted professional development, as decided upon through district observations of needs for the school as a whole. Overall qualitative and quantitative data gathered during the school quality review illustrates disconnect between observed classroom instruction, professional feedback, and targeted professional development for both administrators and teachers.

VII.   Appendix A: Evidence for Remaining School Turnaround Principles

Background

We believe it is valuable for school and district leaders to have a summary of the TAT's findings and evidence for each of the eight Turnaround Principles. As such, this section of the report outlines key findings and supporting evidence for each of the Turnaround Principles that were not identified by school and district leaders as prioritized Turnaround Principles for this school.

This information is intentionally provided in an appendix to reinforce the importance of the previously stated findings, evidence, ratings, and recommendations for the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

School Turnaround Principle #1: Effective Leadership
Evidence Sources
Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations
Evidence Summary
Strengths   - As is evident on the teacher survey, 97% of teachers agree or strongly agree with the statement, "Our principal ensures students and teachers feel safe, welcome and ready to learn and teach." (1.3)   - As is evident on the parent survey, 70% of parents agree or strongly agree with the statement, "The principal supports academically-focused relationships between teachers and parents." (1.10)   - The principal provides a data discussion each nine weeks with students explaining the current state of each grade level as a whole, compared to the goals that are set for academic and behavioral growth. (1.4)   Areas for Improvement   - During the teacher focus group, teachers indicate that they do not identify the principal as the instructional leader of the building. (1.5)   - As is evident in the teacher survey, 60% of teachers somewhat agree or agree with the statement, "Our principal is actively involved in classrooms." (1.5, 1.6)   - Intervention and Professional Learning Community systems are not consistently monitored for support and/or fidelity of use by the principal. (1.7)

School Turnaround Principle #2: Climate and Culture

Evidence Sources

Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- There is a robust wrap-around service team at Highland Middle School focused on individual student well-being and growth. (2.1)
- Highland Middle School's vision is based on student growth both academically and socio-emotionally. (2.2)
- A PBIS structure is in place for students to be recognized for positive contributions in and outside of the classroom. (2.1)
- As is evident through classroom observations, 88% of observations demonstrate that, "Interactions among teachers and students are positive and respectful."

Areas for Improvement
- Student and teacher focus groups demonstrate that the PBIS rewards are not consistently attainable throughout the building. (2.1)
- As is evident through classroom observations, the quality of academic instruction and behavioral expectations varies from classroom to classroom. (2.2, 2.3)

School Turnaround Principle #5: Effective Staffing Practices

Evidence Sources

Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- There are four administrators in the building, four instructional coaches in the building, a wrap-around team for socio-emotional supports, and a Dean per grade level in order to support staff and student growth and achievement. (5.4)
- Staff identified to be immersed in the Purdue Pulse Project are provided professional development specifically related to implementing effective teaching practices in order to teach the program's units of study. (5.5)
- There is a mentorship program provided by the district (PAR), which provides first year teachers and teachers who are struggling an opportunity to collaborate with a veteran teacher over the essential elements of effective teaching. (5.1)

Areas for Improvement
- As is evident on the teacher survey, 42% of teachers somewhat agree or agree with the statement, "Our principal and school leaders observe and provide meaningful feedback to each teacher on a weekly basis to ensure instructional alignment with state standards." (5.2)
- As is evident through classroom observations, in 73% of observations, "The lesson objective is aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards." (5.2)
- A consistent coaching cycle for providing feedback over improving classroom instruction is not present. (5.3)

School Turnaround Principle #6: Effective Use of Data
Evidence Sources
Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations
Evidence Summary

Strengths
- There is a structure in the master schedule in order for all teachers to collaborate over data intended to inform instruction. (6.3)
- The student focus group demonstrates that goal setting based on NWEA data is a common practice throughout the building. (6.2)
- English/ Language Arts and Math teachers collaborate with the data coach on a weekly basis in order to discuss current student data as it compares to curriculum maps. (6.2)

Areas for Improvement
- The data coach runs a data share once every nine weeks in order for all teachers to discuss during Professional Learning Communities, which only provides an interim snapshot of student academic data. (6.3)
- Student class placement is based on NWEA data; there is not a triangulated system for analyzing data present. (6.2)
- As is evident through focus group conversations, teacher collaborations, teacher surveys, and classroom observations; a common system for analyzing data in order to inform differentiated instruction is not implemented with fidelity throughout the building. (6.1, 6.2, 6.3)

School Turnaround Principle #7: Effective Use of Time

Evidence Sources

Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- Hallway transitions are orderly and efficient, which allows an emphasis on maximizing instructional time, as demonstrated through observations and focus group conversations. (7.1)
- The master schedule includes a daily time dedicated to student remediation and enrichment. (7.2)
- Staff are able to be immersed in professional learning opportunities by collaborating with the Math coach, English/ Language Arts coach, e-Learning coach, and/or Data coach. (7.3)

Areas for Improvement
- As is evident through the parent survey, 59% of parents somewhat agree or agree with the statement, "The school schedule is structured to meet the needs of all students." (7.1)
- Although a daily time for intervention exists, remedial and enrichment instruction is not consistent nor monitored for effectiveness. (7.2)
- As is evident through focus group conversations, students may be incorrectly placed into specific ability groups based on identification criteria. (7.2)

School Turnaround Principle #8: Effective Family and Community Engagement

Evidence Sources

Classroom Observations, Teacher Focus Group, Teacher Surveys, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Student Focus Group, Parent Surveys, Parent Focus Group, Building Leadership Focus Groups, District Focus Group, Professional Learning Community Observations, Early Release Meeting Observations, After School Club Observations

Evidence Summary

Strengths
- Home visits in order to connect with families over student academic and socio-emotional needs are common at Highland Middle School. (8.1)
- Strong community partnerships consistently provide support and mentorship for students at Highland Middle School. (8.2)
- The parent focus group indicates that the principal is visible and approachable. (8.1)

Areas for Improvement
- As is evident through the parent survey, 58% of parents somewhat agree or agree with the statement, "The adults at our school know and understand students' personal and academic needs related to race, ethnicity, poverty, the learning of English, and disabilities." (8.1)
- Parents during the parent focus group described the school's communication as, "Seek and ye shall find." (8.1)